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Message Text

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TAGS:UN, FAO, ECOSOC

SUBJECT: POSITION PAPER FOR ECOSOC ITEM 17 (A)

1. RECENT WORLD FOOD COUNCIL SESSION (JUNE 23-28, ROME)
FELL CONSIDERABLY SHORT OF MARK AS RESULT LDC ANTIPATHY TO
WHAT THEY CLAIMED TO BE LACK OF COMPETENCE ON PART OF
SECRETARIAT. LED BY SENEGAL (WHICH UNFORTUNATELY ALLOWED
SPEAK REPEATEDLY AS OBSERVER), GUINEA, MEXICO, BANGLADESH
AND CUBA, LDC'S SOUGHT TO REPLACE ENTIRE WFC SECRETARIAT
AND ELEVATE ROLE OF COUNCIL PRESIDENT. FYI: LDC DISSATIS-
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FACTION WITH SECRETARIAT DATES FROM APPOINTMENT EXECUTIVE

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DIRECTOR HANNAH BY WALDHEIM WITH LITTLE OR NO LDC INPUT.
END FYI.

2. LARGELY BECAUSE OF THIS DIVERSION, FIRST SESSION MADE NO PROGRESS ON ADOPTING RULES OF PROCEDURE AND SUCCEEDED ONLY IN REVIEWING THE PRESENT WORLD FOOD SITUATION, THE STATUS OF WORLD FOOD CONFERENCE IMPLEMENTATION IN VARIOUS UN AGENCIES AND AGREEING ON SOME GENERAL GUIDELINES AND SUGGESTIONS FOR THE FUTURE WORK OF THE COUNCIL. LEFT UNCLEAR WAS WHEN THE COUNCIL WILL MEET AGAIN AND WHETHER IT CAN (A) ACHIEVE FUTURE SUCCESS AND (B) SUSTAIN PARTICIPATION AT THE MINISTERIAL-PLENIPOTENTIARY LEVEL.

3. SINCE THE WFC WAS SPECIFICALLY ASKED TO REPORT THROUGH ECOSOC IT SEEMS CERTAIN SOME ASPECTS OF THE JUNE MEETING WILL BE DISCUSSED. POSITION PAPER FOR ECOSOC ITEM 17 (A) WAS PREPARED PRIOR WFC MEETING AND REQUIRES UPDATING. REVISED "POSITION" FOLLOWS:
(A) DESPITE JUNE 23-28 OCCURRENCES, THE DELEGATION SHOULD TAKE A POSITIVE APPROACH REGARDING THE FUTURE OF THE WFC. WHILE WE RECOGNIZE THE DIFFICULTY INVOLVED IN ORGANIZING THIS NEW HIGHLEVEL COUNCIL WE STILL BELIEVE IT CAN BE USEFUL IN MONITORING THE WORLD FOOD SITUATION AND RECOMMENDING ACTION WHERE NECESSARY TO EFFECT REMEDIES OR ELIMINATE GAPS AND PROBLEM AREAS.
(B) THE DELEGATION MAY, HOWEVER, AS APPROPRIATE, EXPRESS REGRET THAT GREATER PROGRESS WAS NOT MADE IN THE FIRST WFC SESSION. IF THE COUNCIL IS TO ACHIEVE THE SUCCESS WHICH MEMBERS CLAIM THEY WISH IT TO HAVE, THERE MUST BE A SHARPER FOCUS ON WHAT COUNCIL CAN REALISTICALLY DO AND THE PROGRAM OF WORK ADOPTED ACCORDINGLY.
(C) THE DELEGATION SHOULD RESIST ANY EFFORT TO HAVE ECOSOC BECOME INVOLVED IN CRITICISM OF WFC SECRETARIAT EMPLOYEES OR THE WAY IN WHICH THEY WERE APPOINTED AND IT SHOULD OPPOSE ANY ATTEMPT TO HAVE ECOSOC ENDORSE REPLACEMENT OF THE SECRETARIAT OR INCREASING THE ROLE OF THE COUNCIL PRESIDENT. WE BELIEVE THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY WAS WISE IN LEAVING THE APPOINTMENT OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR IN THE HANDS OF SECRETARY-GENERAL WALDHEIM AND THAT SELECTION OF DR. HANNAH TO BRING THIS IMPORTANT BODY INTO BEING WAS
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SOUND.
(D) IN EXPRESSING US HOPE THAT THE WFC WILL SOLVE ITS ORGANIZATIONAL PROBLEMS AT ITS NEXT SESSION THE DELEGATION SHOULD REITERATE US SUPPORT FOR THE COUNCIL AND THE KEY ROLE WE THINK IT CAN PLAY IN BRINGING HIGH LEVEL ATTENTION TO SPECIFIC FOOD PROBLEMS. WE ARE PREPARED TO CONTINUE OUR PARTICIPATION IN THE AD HOC WORKING GROUP ON THE RULES OF PROCEDURE AND WILL, OF COURSE, ATTEND THE SECOND WFC

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SESSION WHEN CONVENED.
(E) WITH REGARD TO PREPARATION FOR THE SECOND SESSION
WE WOULD EXPECT THE SECRETARIAT TO HOLD EXTENSIVE CONSULTA-
TION WITH M:MBER GOVERNMENTS AND TO TAKE STEPS TO ENSURE
THAT THE DOCUMENTATION FOR THE SESSION IS SOUNDLY PREPARED.
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